

Explo, Camp Minden, LA -- Evacuation still in effect, as crews continue to move explosives away from the town of Doyline.

“Explo Systems is a 7-year old, veteran-owned small business located on the former Louisiana Army Ammunition Plant (LAAP). Explo’s management has been demilitarizing / recovering explosives / propellant for over 15 years.” <http://www.explosystems.com/> In October, 2012, Explo had a explosion that rocked the city of Minden, LA. That explosion is not directly related to the situation currently at the facility but it did lead to the investigation by the Louisiana State Police (LSP) that discovered the dangerous situation. LSP found a huge amount of propellant and explosives stored in ruins of buildings, on roadways, and many other areas within the facility. Explo’s business is to recover old propellant and explosives and remill and repackage them for resale. The input continued but the sales declined supposedly due to the economy.

Material continued to come in but they stacked up the propellant all over the place. Its obvious that they tried to hide the material. In some areas, thousands of wooden pallets are stacked up to hide the material. In other places, long lines of material is hidden by a few rows of “empty drums and boxes”. Explo leases the facility as well as several magazines or bunkers where explosives are stored. The National guard now runs Camp Minden. Explo was behind on the rent of the facility and many magazines. National Guard refused to allow Explo to rent or use any additional magazines. So, Explo used whatever space on the facility. LSP estimates that there is between 6 and 9 million pounds of the propellant improperly stored on the facility. And at least that much of double are in the leased magazines.

Using blast tables for the material, the danger zone for the concussive damage is about 7,000 feet. Vast quantities of the material is within 4,000 feet. This weekend, the LSP, Parish, etc, called for an evacuation of the town of Doyline as crews moved the material to other magazines and farther away from the population. On Saturday and Sunday, crews moved 27 truck loads, LSP has extended the evacuation to include Tuesday.

The Explo company may not be able to afford the necessary corrective actions. The state of Louisiana will certainly come to EPA seeking assistance should Explo falter. Most of the material is thought to be M6 Propellant. It’s used in artillery shells. It deflagrates as compared to exploding. There are other materials that are in fact explosives.